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ABSTRACT

To determine the reasons why graduates of agricultural education do not enter the profession, or chose to leave it after a period of time, a mailed questionnaire survey was conducted on agricultural education graduates from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University from 1968-73. Twenty-four non-teaching graduates were identified and surveyed and 17 responses were gained (71 percent). Personal, educational, and work-related data are tabulated and an analysis of the results is also presented. A wide variety of reasons are given for not entering the profession. The predominant factors were: to secure more personal freedom, to secure a higher salary, to improve their family situation, and to get away from too much red tape. The writer suggests that the report provides important input for teacher educators and those associated with the preparation of teachers of agricultural education in the technical agricultural subject areas. Selected references are given. The questionnaire and letters used in the survey are appended. (Author/EC)

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# A FOLLOW-UP OF NON-TEACHING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION GRADUATES

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1974

# A FIVE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE NON-TEACHING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION GRADUATES - 1968-73

by
Larry E. Miller

The above research project was authorized through the College of Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Agricultural Education Program
Division of Vocational and Technical Education

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Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important decisions a person makes in his lifetime is that of choosing a career. Often this choice is preempted by a decision to further one's education. When the person chooses a career other than that for which he was prepared, then there is usually a set of reasons that facilitate such a decision. These reasons are worthy of study by educators. Factors related to preparation or the profession may have precipitated the decision. This study was undertaken to gather information from the 1968-73 Agricultural Education graduates of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Virginia is far above the national average of those Agricultural Education graduates who enter their profession; a 72.5%, 5-year average, as compared with a relatively stable one-year average of 54.8% nationally. This does not defray the shortage of qualified Agricultural Education teachers needed in the state. VPI & SU qualified nineteen teachers of Agricultural Education in 1973, thirteen of whom taught, one of whom returned to the farm, and four returned to do further graduate work. Approximately fifty positions have been filled in the state this year, some with out-of-state teachers and some with unqualified personnel. The most readily apparent solution to the dilemma is to conduct a recruitment program for Ag. Ed. majors. This is being done. It is encountering difficulty, however, due to the current visibility of the oversupply of teachers in other areas. An alternative procedure is to encourage more of those trained as teachers to enter the profession. An enumeration of

the reasons of those not entering the profession, or entering the profession and later leaving it, could provide the teacher training staff with valuable information to facilitate a greater number entering and remaining in the profession.

## RELATED LITERATURE

Woodin (1973a) reported that there were 10,716 positions in teaching vocational agriculture in the United States in 1972, an increase of 278 for the year; replacements were needed for 1,206, and state supervisors predict that 11,977 teachers will be needed by 1975. He further stated that the teacher shortage continued, with seventy-four departments in the United States could not open because of a shortage of qualified persons to teach them.

Woodin (1973b) reported that the most acute shortages of teachers were in Florida, Virginia, Washington, North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana. He further elaborated that, nationally, while an all-time high of 1,759 graduates were qualified only 54.8% of the graduates entered the profession. Although Virginia has a critical shortage, Miller (1973) found that 72.5% of the graduates qualified over the past five years were still employed in their major area of professional preparation. He found the following to be the yearly breakdown of those teaching in their major field of preparation.

| Year | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1968-69 | 17/28 | 60.8 |
| 1969-70 | 15/18 | 83.3 |
| 1970-71 | 16/20 | 80.0 |
| 1971-72 | 19/25 | 76.0 |
| 1972-73 | 12/18 | 66.7 |
| 1968-73 | 79/109 | 72.5 |

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be to determine the reasons that graduates in Agricultural Education did not enter the profession, or entered the profession and chose to leave it.

## Statement of the Problem

1. Why did graduates in Agricultural Education, over the past five years, choose not to enter the profession for which they were trained?
2. Why did those graduates in Agricultural Education over the past five years, enter the profession and subsequently leave it?

## Limitations of the Study

1. The population of this study is limited to those 1968-73 graduates in Agricultural Education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
2. The "slice-of-time" variable and questionnaire return rate are anticipated limitations.

# Chapter 2

## METHODOLOGY

### Design

The data gathering techniques employed in this study will be those of a survey. The survey was used to ascertain those variables that are related to the problem.

### Sampling

Since the number of graduates of Agricultural Education from (1968-73) is small (n=24), the entire population was used as the invited sample (population).

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was researcher developed and is found in Appendix A. It includes check lists, open-ended questions, demographic questions, and space for comments.

### Conditions of Testing

Since this was a mailed questionnaire, the respondents completed the instrument in a setting of their own choosing at their own rate. The original letter, Appendix B, and a follow-up letter (Appendix C) that was mailed and that constituted the extent of the directions provided the subjects.

### Data Analysis

Since this is a survey, employing questionnaire techniques, the important analysis took the form of frequency counts on items, and a

compilation of the other comments provided by the subjects. Results are presented in figure and table forms.

## Procedure

The following procedural steps were followed in the conduct of this study:

1. Instrument developed
2. Determination of list of invited subjects
3. Questionnaires were mailed to subjects
4. Follow-up questionnaires were mailed twice to subjects who responded slowly or not at all
5. Data was compiled and analyzed
6. A report of the study was prepared.

Chapter 3

## RESULTS

This study was conducted to determine why 1968-73 graduates from VPI & SU in Agricultural Education chose not to enter the profession for which they were trained, or why they entered and subsequently left it. Twenty-four subjects were identified and surveyed. Seventeen responses were gained, 71 percent, by the mail techniques employed. The following figures and tables are presented to represent and interpret the gathered data.

Figure I

NUMBER OF YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

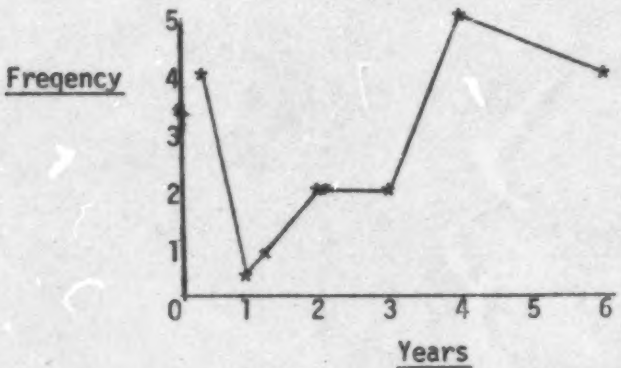


Figure II

NUMBER OF YEARS OF FFA

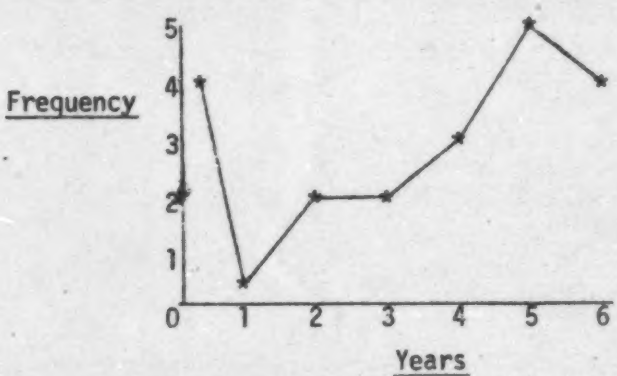

Figure III

COUNTY OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
OF 1968-73 NON-TEACHING
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION GRADUATES

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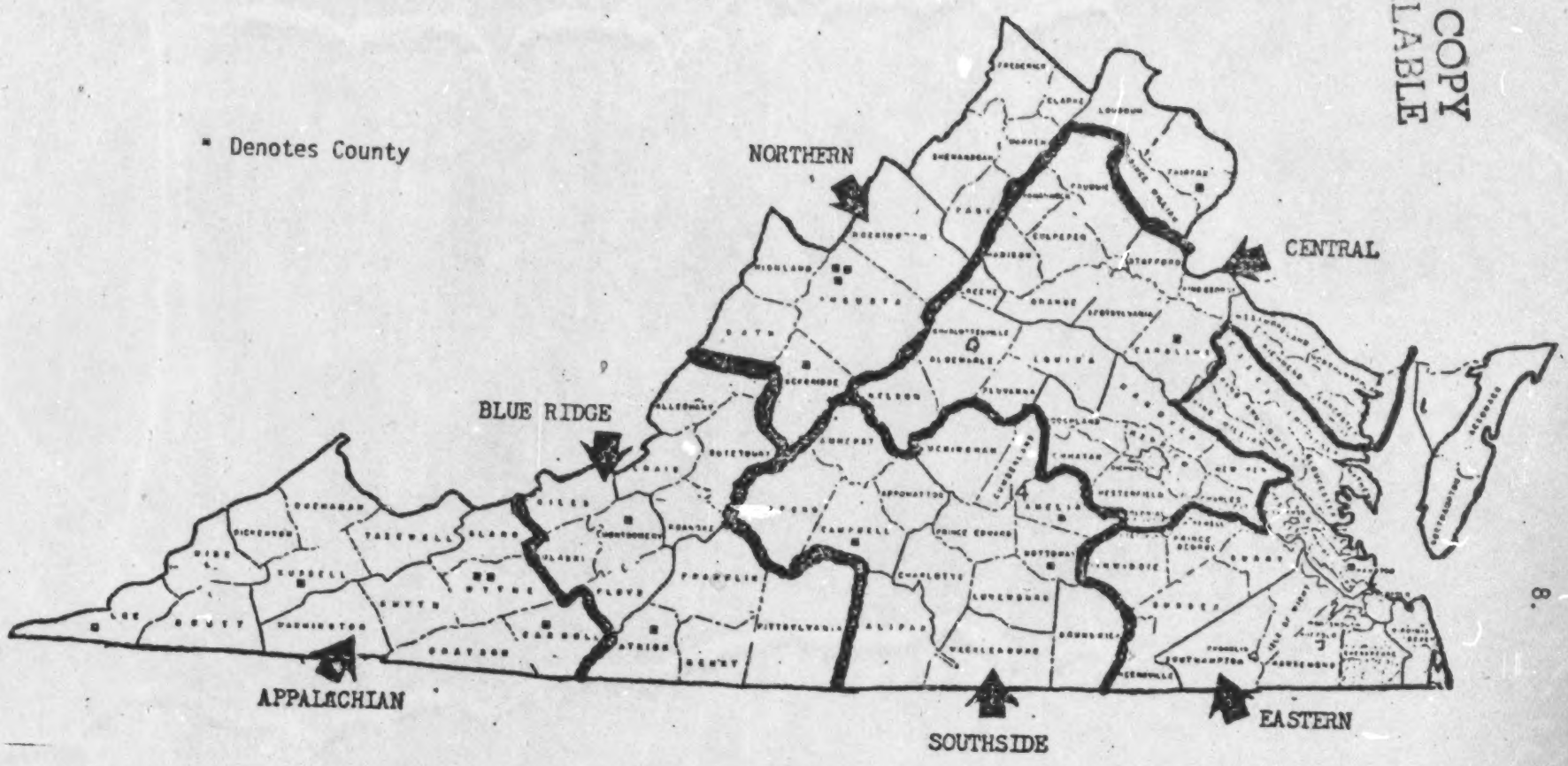

TABLE 1

FFA OFFICES HELD - NUMBER*

| Office | Frequency Local | State |
|---|---|---|
| President | 6 | 1 |
| Vice-President | 3 | 2 |
| Secretary | 2 | 0 |
| Treasurer | 3 | 0 |
| Reporter | 4 | 0 |
| Sentinel | 4 | 0 |

* Total Number may not equal number of respondents due to their holding more than one office while in FFA.

TABLE 2

TRANSFERRED TO VPI&SU FROM ANOTHER COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | | 9 |
| No | | 7 |
| Schools | Ferrum | 2 |
| | Chowan | 1 |
| | Bridgewater | 1 |
| | Tennessee Tech | 1 |
| | Hytheville Community College | 3 |
| | East Tennessee State | 1 |

TABLE 3

TRANSFERRED MAJOR FROM ANOTHER SUBJECT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | | 4 |
| No | | 13 |
| College Departments | Agriculture | 4 |
| | Animal Science | 3 |
| | Ag. Engineering | 1 |

TABLE 4

DECIDED TO MAJOR IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

| When | Frequency |
|---|---|
| High School | 9 |
| Between High School and College | 3 |
| In College | 3 |

TABLE 5

PERSON MOST INFLUENCING MY DECISION TO MAJOR IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

| Influential Others | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Mother | 0 |
| Father | 0 |
| Friend | 1 |
| Ag. Ed. Teacher | 10 |
| Guidance Counselor | 0 |
| Other Teacher | 0 |
| College Ag. Ed. Staff | 2 |
| College Recruiter | 0 |
| County Agent | 0 |
| Personal Reading and Inquiry | 4 |
| Other | 0 |

TABLE 6

REASONS DESIRED TO TEACH AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

| Response Categories | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Desire to teach students | 7 |
| Broad background provided by Ag. Ed. Curriculum | 7 |
| Availability of jobs | 1 |
| Salary | 0 |
| Social status of Ag. Ed. teachers in community | 0 |
| Desire to teach adults | 0 |
| Other: Easy major | 1 |
| Liked Ag. Ed. and wanted to teach | 1 |
| Enjoyed shopwork and youth | 1 |

TABLE 7

FIRST JOB AFTER GRADUATION

| Self-listed response | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Agricultural Education Teacher | 5 |
| Armed Services | 3 |
| College | 1 |
| Other Teaching | 6 |
| Farming | 2 |

TABLE 8

ATTRACTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

| Listed Feature (multiply checked) | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Helping students get started in the agribusiness industry | 7 |
| Contact and working with rural people | 15 |
| Contact and working with rural youth | 12 |
| Shopwork | 12 |
| Opportunity for a variety of work | 11 |
| Working with the FFA | 10 |
| Working with adults | 7 |
| Classroom teaching was a challenge | 7 |
| Opportunity to live and work in rural area | 13 |
| Pleasant working conditions and associates | 6 |
| Security | 5 |
| Opportunity to known many people | 8 |
| Other | 0 |

TABLE 9

DISLIKED FEATURES OF THE PROFESSION

| Listed Feature (multiply checked) | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Reporting procedures required of teachers | 10 |
| Monotony of classroom work | 3 |
| Work with adults | 1 |
| Considerations for health reasons | 0 |
| Low salary | 5 |
| Lack of opportunity for advancement | 6 |
| Insecurity | 0 |
| Shopwork | 1 |
| FFA and other extracurricular activities | 1 |
| Lack of student interest | 7 |
| Lesson planning | 3 |
| Discipline problems | 4 |
| Living conditions | 0 |
| Supervision of students experience programs | 1 |
| Associates, fellow teachers, were not congenial | 1 |
| Lack of State Department support | 4 |
| Lack of Local support | 3 |
| Lack of preparation for the profession in college | 4 |
| Other "not convenient to wife's job" | 1 |
| "Cliques among undergraduates and professionals | 1 |
| "Lack of personal freedom" | 1 |
| "Too much red tape" | 1 |

TABLE 10

REASONS FOR NOT TEACHING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

| Listed Reasons (multiply checked) | | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Higher salary | | 6 |
| Advancement and security | | 4 |
| Poor teaching positions available | | 2 |
| Less politics involved | | 3 |
| More personal freedom | | 8 |
| Family situation | | 6 |
| Too long a work day | | 1 |
| Too much "red tape" | | 5 |
| Deteriorating image of agriculture | | 0 |
| Other: | Draft | 2 |
| | Ministry | 1 |
| | Not recommended by supervisor | 1 |
| | Location | 2 |
| | Integration | 1 |
| | Indifference by VPI and State Staff | 1 |

TABLE 11

RECRUITMENT SUGGESTIONS

1. "Explain to incoming freshmen the demand for Agriculture teachers and the position available."
2. "More emphasis on wide scope entailment in related agribusiness."
3. "Vo-Ag teachers much sell their program and get their students' interest through complete participation in a total Ag. program."
4. "Meet with Ag. Ed. students in high school."
5. "Present realistic picture of teaching job and opportunities in the field through Ag. classes in the state and recruitment should take care of itself."
6. "Adequate."
7. "Honestly, until the education system improves and allows teachers to discipline students I would not recommend anyone to get into education of any kind."
8. "Use Ag. teachers more for recruitment, they are the best salesmen we could have for future Ag. teachers."
9. "Very good, keep as is."
10. "Present to all high school juniors and seniors a program on Ag. Ed. Opportunity."
11. "Rearranging Ag. Ed. curriculum at VPI and then publicizing these, more people might become interested."

TABLE 12

COLLEGE PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS:
TECHNICAL COURSES IN AGRICULTURE

1. "Very good."
2. "Teach more wood working in shop courses. Teach shop management and purchasing. Prepare students better for FFA Advisor and Judging Contests. More preparation for options in Ag."
3. "Insight into ornamentals to evidence scope of field to attract those not interested in livestock and crop farming. Less dependence by professors on consequences of end result."
4. "Need more technical courses that are up-to-date."
5. "Offering of more Ag. related courses and less courses that would have no future benefit."
6. "Very good."
7. "More technical courses in curriculum -- I feel unprepared to work in many areas even after taking courses in the curriculum at the time I was at VPI."
8. "Adequate."
9. "More is needed especially in one's interest area. Delete the math, english and history."
10. "Good."
11. "Very good, keep as is."
12. "More student input in classes, keep up-to-date."
13. Specialized options.

TABLE 13

COLLEGE PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS:
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COURSES

1. "Teach the course based on the way things are in the field rather than as they should be. More emphasis on student control."
2. "The education courses I had at Va. Tech were hurting! The courses need to be more realistic."
3. "More practical and less theory. Every college professor should be required to enter and remain in private business for minimum of 2 yrs. before teaching on college level."
4. "Need less boring education courses especially Educational Psychology, or either different Ed. Psyc. professors."
5. "Comprehensive course covering the latest instructional methods and materials."
6. "Adequate."
7. "Adequate."
8. "Of little actual value."
9. "Too much theory not enough practical application. Time could be better spent in Ag. courses."
10. "Very good. Keep as is."
11. "More student input, keep up-to-date."
12. "More education courses built around 'how to become a more effective classroom teacher.'"

TABLE 14

COLLEGE PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS:
STUDENT TEACHING

1. "Supervised student teaching should only be conducted in the best organized, most active departments."
2. "Student teaching is very important. Best student teacher should be placed in good Ag. Departments throughout the state."
3. "Twice into field. Many questions unanswered after only one with no time allowance for untried adjustments."
4. "Development of a teacher co-op program so the individual can get an earlier picture of the educational field plus receive some monetary benefits."
5. "Closer supervision and more help needed from teacher educators."
6. "Good experience."
7. "Very good and necessary but too much paper work."
8. "Very good, keep as is."
9. "Have supervised summer experiences, allow student teachers to evaluate experiences, use video tape.
10. Teach in option.

TABLE 15

COLLEGE PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS:
STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

1. "More social functions with staff and families."
2. "Try to relate to freshmen more."
3. "Fair."
4. "Staff should work closely with all Ag. Ed. students - not just a select group of 'better' students (of course this statement is based on the teacher educators at VPI when I was there and I realize the personnel are different individuals and this situation may already have been corrected)."
5. "Okay."
6. "Thought relationships were excellent."
7. "More time alloted for round-table discussions - but still pertinent to subject matter."
8. "I had a good relationship with the staff in Ag. Ed."
9. "Were very good when I was in the department."

TABLE 16

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS IN EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

1. "Net income needs to be greater, merit pay should be considered."
2. "Less hours required of the teacher; also, less paper work."
3. "Cut out unnecessary reports and useless activities so state personnel can have jobs. If all visitation work is necessary, let teachers have more pay for it - he is human and enjoys family life and hobbies."
4. Trend to options is good.
5. "Not having to work with students taking the course because guidance can't find any other place to put them."
6. "Reduce pressure from school administrators wanting to phase out Ag. Ed. because of less need for farmers."
7. "Reporting should be simplified, if possible. Salaries need improvement. New teachers should never be placed in a single teacher department. Need closer supervision from State Department at the start. Stronger discipline measures needed."

TABLE 17

FUTURE PLANS

| | |
|---|---|
| Do you plan to teach Agricultural Education sometime in the future? | |
| Yes | 6 |
| No | 5 |
| Undecided | 6 |

Plans 5 years from now, if not in Agricultural Education:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | N. C. Extension Service | 1 |
| 2. | Dentistry | 1 |
| 3. | Industrial arts | 1 |
| 4. | Expand farming and fertilizer business | 1 |
| 5. | Farming | 1 |
| 6. | Yes, Ag. Ed. teaching in 1975 | 1 |
| 7. | Ministry | 1 |
| 8. | Either teaching science or counseling | 1 |
| 9. | Yes to teaching Ag. Ed., after returning from service in August 1974 | 1 |
| 10. | Banking and farming | 1 |

## INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The reader should be cognizant of the fact that these results are from 71 percent of the non-teaching Agricultural Education graduates (n=17) from 1968-73. The other limitations of the study are also applicable. The researcher will interpret the figures and tables separately.

Figure I illustrates the number of years of high school Agricultural Education that the non-teaching graduates in Agricultural Education had while they were in junior and senior high school. The mode was four years, with five respondents in that group. Four respondents had no Agricultural Education classes, and four had four years. There seems to be no trend to indicate that the non-teaching graduates would differ significantly from a greater population of all graduates. The number of years in FFA, Figure II, forms a similar graphic representation. The mode of which is five years of FFA with five respondents in this response group.

Figure III illustrates the counties from which the Agricultural Education graduates who chose not to teach over the past five years came. Further examination of student personnel records reveals that the higher frequency from Augusta County could be accounted for by the corresponding higher frequency of Agricultural Education graduates who came from that county during the five-year period. The figure illustrates that all areas of the State had graduates in Agricultural Education who chose not to teach.

Table I reveals the FFA Offices that were held by non-teaching Agricultural Education graduates. The trend would tend to indicate that the subjects did not suffer from a lack of potential leadership experiences in high school which could contribute to their lack of

potential leadership experiences in high school which could contribute to their lack of familiarity with the FFA and ultimately an uneasiness with the organization and the job of teaching. It is often conjectured that talents developed in State FFA Officers make them prime candidates for public relations types of employment in industry; and, therefore, the prospect of holding them in teaching is slight. This was not a hypotheses of this study, but data illustrates that three of the seventeen subjects replying to the questionnaire had had experiences as State FFA Officers.

Of the sixteen responses to the question regarding transferring from another institution to VPI & SU, which is reported in Table 2, nine indicated that they had transferred to VPI & SU. Since further investigation of student information reveals that far less than half the undergraduate Agricultural Education students in a given year at VPI & SU are transfer students, the fact that 56 percent of the replying non-teaching graduates were transfer students would suggest that this hypotheses would be due further testing and investigation.

Table 3 showed that 24 percent of the non-teaching Agricultural Education graduates transferred to the Agricultural Education program from another College. All came from the College of Agriculture and 75 percent (N=3) were from the Animal Science Department and 25 percent (N=1) from the Agricultural Engineering Department. This proportion could be interpreted as being representative of the population, all undergraduate majors in Agricultural Education.

Table 4 supports previously reported research findings that most Agricultural Education majors decide upon their majors while they are in high school. The proposition that the most "influential other" in the career decision of a prospective Agricultural Education

student is the high school Agricultural Education teacher, and this is illustrated in Table 5. The second most often contributing factor, as indicated by the respondents, was from their personal reading and inquiry. Additional influences were noted by the respondents from the College Agricultural Education Staff and from a friend.

Table 6 presents the reasons the respondents initially desired to teach Agricultural Education. The bimodal responses were a desire to teach students and the broad background provided by the Agricultural Education curriculum. One respondent noted that the availability of jobs was an important factor in his choosing to major in Agricultural Education. Factors added to the checklist by respondents included it being an easy major (N=1), liked agriculture and wanted to teach (N=1) and enjoyed shopwork and youth.

As presented in Table 7, the first job accepted after graduation by the majority of the respondents was in teaching Agricultural Education and other teaching. Three entered the military service, two went into farming and one went on into graduate school but did not then teach Agricultural Education. VPI & SU, as an institution, is steeped in the military tradition. A continually smaller percentage of its student body is enrolled in military science. Miller (1973) found that none of the 1973 graduates entered the military service. Therefore, the diminished pressure from the draft may result in a more immediate entry by people into the profession for which they are trained. With a surplus of teachers in other academic areas, the number of Agricultural Education majors entering these positions may be expected to decrease. Those returning to the farm might be expected to increase with the corresponding increase in the prices of farm products.

Table 8 presents those features that the respondents checked as being attractive features of Agricultural Education. The four most frequently checked features were, in order:

1. Contact and working with rural people (N=15),
2. Opportunity to live and owrk in rural area (N=13),
3. Contact and working with rural youth (N=12), and
4. Shopwork (N=12).

In Table 9, the respondents were asked to note the features of the profession that they disliked. The four most frequently checked features were, in order:

1. Reporting procedures required of teachers (N=10),
2. Lack of student interest (N=7),
3. Lack of opportunity for advancement (N=6), and
4. Low salary (N=5).

In Table 10, respondents were asked to supplement the information presented in Table 9 by checking their reasons for not teaching Agricultural Education. The four most frequently checked features were, in order:

1. More personal freedom (N=8),
2. Higher salary (N=6),
3. Family situation (N=6), and
4. Too much "red tape" (N=5).

It might be worthwhile to note that two respondents each listed the draft and location as independent responses as their reasons for not teaching Agricultural Education.

Suggestions for recruitment are presented in Table 11. It is difficult to draw generalizations from open-ended questions. However, it might be worthwhile to note that the suggestion that increased emphasis

be placed on recruitment by teachers of Agricultural Education is a recurring suggestion.

Conclusions that can be drawn from Table 12 are again limited. A subjective observation, based upon the replies, that might be drawn from the comments in regard to the preparation received in technical agriculture are that on the whole they are pleased, that they would like to see more hours of technical courses in the program and that more specialization should be allowed in the technical option area of the students.

In a similarly designed question about the professional education preparation the respondents received, as presented in Table 13, a negative note can be heard. It appears that unnecessary emphasis has been placed on theory and not enough on the practical in the opinion of the responding non-teaching graduates in Agricultural Education. The general education preparation was also questioned.

Table 14 reports the respondents suggestions in regard to student teaching. The undertones here seem to be that it is a valuable experience, has too much paper work, should be conducted in the best programs, should include summer experiences, should include earlier experiences in teaching and requires closer supervision.

The relationships between the staff and students, as illustrated in Table 15, appears to be positive. Suggestions for improvement by having more social functions, relating more to freshmen, and having more round-table discussions should be noted.

Suggested improvements in the employment situation were made by the respondents and are presented in Table 16. The underlying problems that need to be improved appear to be in the areas of salary, reporting procedures, working hours and pressure to teach students who do not have vocational objectives in agriculture.

Thirty-five percent of the respondents indicated in Table 17 that they intend to teach Agricultural Education in the future. Five respondents reported that they definitely do not plan to teach, and six said they were undecided. Ten individuals also responded to what they planned to be doing five years hence. A wide diversity of responses was gained, with two indicating their plans were to return to teaching Agricultural Education.

## Chapter 4

## SUMMARY

In drawing conclusions from the results gained, the reader should be cognizant of the fact that responses were obtained from 71 percent of the 1968-1973 non-teaching Agricultural Education graduates (N=17) at VPI & SU. The generalizability of the results is further limited by the time-sampling problem encountered by survey studies. The question definitely exists as to the reliability and validity of the questionnaire used for gathering data. The population of the study was the 24 non-teaching graduates in Agricultural Education from 1968-73, and also comprised the invited sample. The accepting and data sample was comprised of seventeen (N=17) respondents.

Addressing the problem statements of the study, one can guardedly generalize to report that the respondents did not enter the profession, or entered it and subsequently left it, because of a wide variety of reasons. The predominant ones reported being to secure more personal freedom, to secure a higher salary, to improve their family situation, and to get away from too much "red tape." Educators and state staff personnel might do well to note these factors, do more than give "lip service"to them and take the necessary steps to resolve these problems. Studies over a number of years have repeatedly identified similar concerns. The remediation of these concerns should become a matter of utmost concern as the shortage of teachers in Agricultural Education continues to grow more severe.

The report provides other important imput for teacher educators and those associated with the preparation of teachers of Agricultural Education in the technical agriculture subject areas. It would also provide enlightening information for members of the staff of appropriate state departments of education.

The very real problem of a teacher shortage in Agricultural Education behooves those associated with the profession to endeavor in every way possible to keep qualified teachers in the profession teaching. To accomplish this may necessitate instituting changes to allow the remediation of the problems. It appears that to ameliorate the concerns of non-teaching graduates, as studied, might have induced them to remain in, or enter into, the profession.

## NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. For those who have been employed in Agricultural Education, a correlational study of supervisors and administrators perceptions of the reasons the non-teaching graduates left the profession would be valuable.
2. Replicate the study over a longer period of time with a larger number of respondents.
3. A comparison of the perceptions of the profession and responsibilities of the non-teaching graduates with those who are teaching.
4. A comparison of the VPI & SU results with those at other institutions and in other states.

## SELECTED REFERENCES

Miller, Larry E., "Follow-up of Ag. Ed. Graduates for Past Five Years." Blacksburg, Virginia: Management Report Data in Vocational Education, VPI & SU, 1973. (Mimeographed.)

Woodin, Ralph J., "Facts on Teacher Supply and Demand in Vocational Agriculture in 1972." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 1973, 45, 286.

Woodin, Ralph J., "Facts on Teacher Supply and Demand in Vocational Agriculture in 1972." Paper presented at the annual Agricultural Education Southern Region Conference, Mobile, 1973.

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# APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

_____

FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF NON-AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHING GRADUATES OF AG. ED. AT VPI & SU, 1968-1973

INSTRUCTIONS: Under each heading please fill in the answer necessary to describe your situation. Notations will be appreciated whenever they will assist in giving an accurate account.

I. General Background Information

A. Birth: County: _____ State: _____

B. High School Attended: _____

C. Number of years of Agricultural Education in High School (Check one)

____ 1 year
____ 2 years
____ 3 years
____ 4 years
____ 5 years
____ Other

____Years in FFA

FFA offices held: _____

_____

II. Professional Preparation

A. Did you transfer to VPI & SU from another college/university?

____Yes, ____No

If yes, from where? _____

B. Did you transfer into Ag. Ed. after first majoring in another subject?

____Yes, ____No

If yes, from what: _____ College? _____ Major?

C. When did you decide to major in Ag. Ed.? (Check one)

____ High School
____ Between high school and college
____ In college

D. The person most influential in my decision to major in Ag. Ed. was: (Check one)

____ Mother ____Father
____ Friend ____Ag. Ed. teacher

D. (Continued)

____ Guidance Counselor
____ Other teacher
____ College Ag. Ed. Staff
____ College recruiter
____ County Agent
____ Personal readings and inquiry
____ Other: (Please add) _____

E. I initially desired to train for Ag. Ed. teaching because: (Check one, principle reason)

____ Desire to teach students
____ Broad background provided by Ag. Ed. Curriculum
____ Availability of jobs
____ Salary
____ Social status of Ag. Ed. teachers in community
____ Desire to teach adults
____ Other: (Please add) _____

III. Current Developments

A. My first job after graduation was:

_____

B. I have had subsequent employment in the following areas by year:

| YEAR(S) | JOB TITLE |
|---|---|
| (EXAMPLE) 1970-72 | County Agent, Hanover County |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | (present position) |

C. Check below all features of teaching Ag. Ed. job that seemed to be particularly attractive to you:

____ Helping students get started in the agribusiness industry
____ Contact and working with rural people
____ Contact and working with rural youth
____ Shopwork

C. (Continued)

____ Opportunity for a variety of work
____ Working with the FFA
____ Working with adults
____ Classroom teaching was a challenge
____ Opportunity to live and work in rural area
____ Pleasant working conditions and associates
____ Security
____ Opportunity to know many people
____ Other (please add) _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

D. What features of the job did you dislike? (Check all applicable)

____ Reporting procedures required of teachers
____ Monotony of classroom work
____ Work with adults
____ Considerations for health reasons
____ Low salary
____ Lack of opportunity for advancement
____ Insecurity
____ Shopwork
____ FFA and other extracurricular activities
____ Lack of student interest
____ Lesson planning
____ Discipline problems
____ Living conditions
____ Supervision of students experience programs
____ Associates, fellow teachers, were not congenial
____ Lack of State Department support
____ Lack of Local support
____ Lack of preparation for the profession in college
____ Other (please add) _____

Comments: _____

_____

E. Check the reason(s) that most closely approximates your reason for not teaching Ag. Ed.: (Check as appropriate)

____ Higher salary
____ Advancement and security
____ Poor teaching positions available
____ Less politics involved
____ More personal freedom
____ Family situation
____ Too long a work day
____ Too much "red tape"
____ Deteriorating image of agriculture
____ Other (please add) _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

IV. Suggestions for Improvement

What suggestions for improvement would you suggest in the following area to increase the number of teachers of Agricultural Education?

A. Recruitment -

B. College Preparation -

1. Technical agriculture courses -

2. Professional education courses -

3. Student teaching -

4. Staff-student relationships -

C. Employment Situation - What adjustments in the job of the Ag. Ed. teacher would be beneficial?

V. Future plans

A. Do you plan to teach Ag. Ed. sometime in the future?

____ Yes, ____ No; If yes, when? _____

B. If your plans do not include teaching Ag. Ed., what do you plan to be doing 5 years from now?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance!

APPENDIX B

COLLEGE OF EDUCATIO

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

*Blacksburg, Virginia* 2406

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

March 28, 1974

MEMO

TO: Non-Agricultural Education Teaching Graduates, 1968-1973, of Agricultural Education at VPI & SU

FROM: Larry Miller, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education

RE: Enclosed Survey Questionnaire

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED! We are still experiencing a severe shortage of teachers of Agricultural Education in Virginia and Nationally. Therefore, we need your assistance in helping us improve our training program and the job of teaching Agricultural Education. Your input can be of assistance to us in retaining the teachers we have trained, or will train in the future.

Attached you will find a questionnaire we would like for you to take time to complete. All information will be confidential and will be used in making group comparisons and not individually.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope is included for your response.

Thank you for a prompt response!

LEM/jsb

Enclosures

APPENDIX C

COLLEGE OF EDUCATIO

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSIT

*Blacksburg, Virginia* 240

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

April 29, 1974

SECOND LETTER

To: 1968-73 Non-teaching Agricultural Education Graduates

From: Larry Miller, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education

Larry Miller

Re: Enclosed Survey Questionnaire

We hope that our letters are finding you because we sincerely do need your help. We would like to have your input to help improve our teacher preparation program. We have a lot of new staff members here at Virginia Tech now in Agricultural Education, and we would appreciate learning what we can do to improve it.

We often obtain verbal input from our teachers in the field. But, you are one person we do not have the chance to hear from.

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire. We would appreciate it.

A stamped, addressed, envelope is enclosed for your convenience in mailing the reply.

THANK YOU!

Enclosure